EXHIBIT E



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Prisons Federal Correctional Complex Federal Correctional Institution I

P.O. Box 1000 Butner, North Carolina 27509

Date:

March 13, 2025

ATTN OF: K. Dickerson, Camp

FCI I Butner, North Carolina

TO:

Masecchia, Michael

28848-055 Register Number:

Reduction in Sentence Subject:

This memorandum is in response to a letter received on March 12, 2025, from your Counsel, Elizabeth Budnitz. She requested you be considered for a Compassionate Release (Reduction in Sentence or RIS) due to extraordinary reasons. Specifically, she stated those reasons to be sentencing factors and your strong release plan that will ensure you do not pose a danger to the community.

At this time, those reasons do not meet the guidelines outlined in Program Statement 5050.50, Compassionate Release/Reduction in Sentence: Procedures for Implementation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 3582 (c)(1)(A) and 4205(g), provides guidance on the types of circumstances that present extraordinary or compelling reasons, such as the inmate's terminal medical condition; debilitated medical condition; status as a "new law" elderly inmate, an elderly inmate with medical conditions, or an "other elderly inmate"; the death or incapacitation of the family member caregiver of the inmate's child; or the incapacitation of the inmate's spouse or registered partner. Program Statement 5050.50 provides guidance for consideration of a RIS for extraordinary or compelling circumstances as stated above.

This request does not meet the criteria of any of the categories in the program statement for review at the institution level. If you would like for a request for Compassionate Release/Reduction in Sentence to be reviewed, please submit a request under the set criteria.

March 4, 2025

Warden of Facility FCI Butner Medium I Federal Correctional Institution P.O. 1000 Butner, NC 27509

Email: BUX-ExecAssistant-S@bop.gov

Re: Request for Reduction in Sentence Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1)(A), for Michael Masecchia, Register Number 28848-055

Dear Warden,

I represent Michael Masecchia, Reg. No. 28848-055, who is currently incarcerated in your facility. I request that the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) release Mr. Masecchia under their compassionate release policy because there are "extraordinary and compelling" reasons for a sentencing reduction, a reduction is consistent with the 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a) sentencing factors, and Mr. Masecchia has a strong release plan that will ensure he does not pose a danger to the community and will meet his needs. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1)(A); U.S.S.G. §1B.1.13; BOP Program Statement 5050.50.

Below, Mr. Masecchia provides you with an extensive, thorough, and comprehensive release plan and an extraordinary and compelling reason to grant release. Mr. Masecchia suffers from that the Bureau of Prisons does not have the capacity to treat at this time. He hopes that you will decide to release him from incarceration in your facility into community supervision so that he can get his treatment in the community, with the help of his family doctors and his loving family.

I. Mr. Masecchia's Background and Exceptional Release Plan

Mr. Masecchia is a 58-year-old father and husband from the Buffalo, New York area, where he has lived his entire life. Before his incarceration, Mr. Masecchia was a beloved high school English teacher and coach. Mr. Masecchia lived with his wife in Tonawanda, New York.¹ Mr. Masecchia and his wife, Krista, have been married for over 30 years, and they have three children together: Jenna (28), Siena (26), and Michael (20).² Mr. Masecchia's wife describes him as an excellent father and a good person; she continues to support him while he is incarcerated and they have stuck close as a family.³

Most of Mr. Masecchia's extended family, including his two siblings, also live in the Buffalo area.⁴ Mr. Masecchia's mother, who is seventy-nine years old

¹ PSR ¶ 67.

² PSR ¶ 70 (with ages adjusted for 2024).

³ PSR ¶ 71.

⁴ PSR ¶ 68.

resides in Deerfield Beach, Florida, but she spends a significant amount of time in Buffalo, where Mr. Masecchia and his siblings care for her.

Mr. Masecchia's mother-in-law resides in his home in Buffalo.

Mr. Masecchia's mother-in-law moved in with his family about two years ago, and currently a physical therapist and Mr. Masecchia's wife, who works from home, care for her. This is a significant burden on the family, especially on Krista Masecchia, who is struggling to juggle caring for her mother and working a full-time job. If he were released, Mr. Masecchia would become a caregiver of his mother-in-law.

Mr. Masecchia graduated from Bennett High School in Buffalo in 1984.⁵ He graduated from D'Youville College in Buffalo in 1991 with a degree in Secondary Education with a concentration in English Literature.⁶ He later obtained a Master of Science in Curriculum Instruction and Assessment on April 26, 2009 from Walden University.⁷

Until 2022, Mr. Masecchia worked as a high school English teacher for the Buffalo Board of Education starting in 1991, and he also coached softball, football, soccer, and bowling.8 His job as an educator and his position as a leader in his community were integral to Mr. Masecchia's identity before he entered prison.

In his nearly 30 years working in Buffalo public schools, Mr. Masecchia touched the lives of many, garnering praise and admiration from many of his students. In connection with this application, several of his former students and coworkers wrote letters of support highlighting Mr. Masecchia's gentle spirit and generous heart.9 Below are just a few excerpts from the letters submitted in support of Mr. Masecchia's character:

"During those 28 years [that I worked with Michael Masecchia], I have never seen a person and teacher more highly effective than Michael. His qualities as a person and a teacher were remarkable. Michael was a teacher who was caring, helpful, motivating, generous, and comical. . . . I have so many good memories of Michael and his generosity. Some of those memories are: Michael buying his entire class breakfast sandwiches in the morning because they were hungry, him bringing food to a co-worker when their spouse was going through cancer treatment, him taking a group of inner city students tubing at Holiday Valley, him and I driving a Soccer player down to Akron to get noticed and changing his life by getting recruited, and him assisting me in taking the Soccer Team to Middletown, NY that helped win the 2014 State Championship."

- Letter from Anthony Alessi, Physical Education Teacher Buffalo Public Schools.

⁵ PSR ¶ 88.

⁶ PSR ¶ 88.

⁷ PSR ¶ 90.

⁸ PSR ¶ 92.

⁹ These letters of support are included herewith as Exhibit D.

"Mr. Masecchia supported students academically while positively supporting them socially and emotionally. His hard work and commitment to our students in our urban school was exceptional. I remember being in 'awe' when I saw Mr. Masecchia in his classroom making sandwiches for his students. He and his students were busy assembling cold cuts, cheese, breads, etc. using a Panini machine that he purchased from his own funds. It was clear that Mr. Masecchia knew that his students may not be fed and would be hungry so he purchased and brought groceries. . . . Through the years, I observed Mr. Masecchia to be a natural leader and teacher. My wish is for him to be home with his family as soon as possible."

-Letter from Dr. Gabrielle Morquecho, Retired Principal at the International Preparatory High School.

"I met Mike when I was a student in 7th grade at International Prep. He was my teacher off and on until I graduated in 2019. If it wasn't for Mike, I probably wouldn't have graduated. Whenever I was going through hard times in life, he was always there for me, even if I wasn't in his class. He would always make time for me. He was one of the few teachers who really wanted to see black kids and kids from other countries succeed."

-Letter from Isreal Sherfield, former student.

"Michael has been my mentor since I started attending Grover Cleveland high school, a month after I landed in the United States as a refugee. I was just a 16year-old, without any idea of how life was supposed to look for me. He started by being my English teacher at first, then my soccer coach. I was raised by a single mother and by being around Michael I realized that a man has to take care of his family, and because of this example as a young man I started trying to make my mother's life easier. He took me to his home and showed me my first super bowl family party, which was one of the best days of my life. He also knew the love I had for soccer and made sure I attended a powerhouse for soccer in the country, a division 1 university (Uni. Of Akron), by raising money for the camp, hotel and food. On top of that he drove me there personally, without hesitating. He took me to Akron because I've never been outside Buffalo and to show me support, I have someone there for me at all times. Also, after I made it to the university, when fall came we packed my stuff and took me to Akron because my mother couldn't take off work and leave my baby sister. These are the highlights of my time with Michael, I could go on all day and tell you how he impacted my life but I would run out of paper."

-Letter from Ezana Y Kashay, whom Mr. Masecchia has mentored.

These letters show a remarkable man, an inspiring teacher, and a positive member of the community, one who is deserving of compassionate release.

On May 4, 2022, Mr. Masecchia came before the Court for sentencing having submitted 19 letters of support on his behalf from former colleagues, former students, friends, and family, including letters from three principals, eight teachers, and four former students. He expressed unmitigated remorse for his crime, saying that there was "no excuse" for what he did, and that he "humiliated" himself, his family, and his colleagues. The Court, in sentencing Mr. Masecchia to the lowest end of the guidelines, noted that the letters submitted on his behalf "describe a dedicated educator and mentor to [his] students, many of whom who have been faced with difficult circumstances." The Court stated:

Regardless of – regardless, really, of the source of the money, you still literally fed hungry students and you did do what you could to protect bullied students and you've been, to them, a role model with a big heart, and that counts for something.

Mr. Masecchia was sentenced to 84 months (7 years) in prison with three years of supervised release.

If he were to be released, Mr. Masecchia would live in the home that he owns with his wife and family in Tonawanda, New York. 13 Mr. Masecchia's wife works as a senior accountant for Reliance Pharmacy, permitting Mr. Masecchia to rely on her for some support as he transitions back into the community.¹⁴ His three grown children, who are all gainfully employed, will also support his transition back to the community. Additionally, Mr. Masecchia earned a pension from his decades as a high school teacher, which also provides health insurance. 15 He plans to assist his nephew with opening a fitness club and to develop the Visual Arts and Language curriculum that he has been working on while in prison. 16 In addition to his strong family support, Mr. Masecchia would also receive assistance from The Last Prisoner Project.

Mr. Masecchia has a strong support system of other family and friends who live in the surrounding areas, where he will reside. The Bureau of Prisons can pick up the phone and call any

¹⁰ PSR ¶ 1. Mr. Masecchia received the latter charge because firearms and ammunition were found in his home, but otherwise, Mr. Masecchia was not charged with or found guilty of any violent offenses. PSR ¶

¹¹ PSR ¶ 77; Dkt. 282.

¹² PSR ¶ 77.

¹³ OPA Pardon Form at 13.

¹⁴ PSR ¶ 70.

¹⁵ OPA Pardon Form at 13.

¹⁶ OPA Pardon Form at 13.

Page 7 of 16

of these individuals, who have all written letters of support for him for compassionate release, and they will state they will support him when he returns to the community.

Krista Masecchia, Mr. Masecchia's wife

Marie Masecchia, Mr. Masecchia's mother

Jenn Masecchia, Mr. Masecchia's 29-year-old daughter.

Bryan Komasara, Mr. Massechia's son-in-law

Siena Masecchia, Mr. Masecchia's 27-year-old daughter

Michael P. Masecchia, Mr. Masecchia's son.

Bart Mazzara, Mr. Masecchia's nephew

Sophia Mazzara, Mr. Masecchia's niece

Filippo Lombardo, Mr. Masecchia's nephew

Gasper Mazzara, Mr. Masecchia's brother-in-law

Lucy Masecchia, Mr. Masecchia's aunt

Juliet Masecchia-Loffredo, Mr. Masecchia's aunt

Enza Gimlin, Mr. Masecchia's cousin

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Anthony Alessi, a fellow teacher friend

Dr. Kevin Eberle, Mr. Masecchia's colleague and school principal.

Dr. Gabriella Morquecho, Mr. Masecchia's colleague and assistant principal.

Victoria Vullo, a fellow teacher friend

Mary Favata, a fellow teacher friend.

Quinn Shatzel, a family friend.

Gianna Sparcino, a family friend.

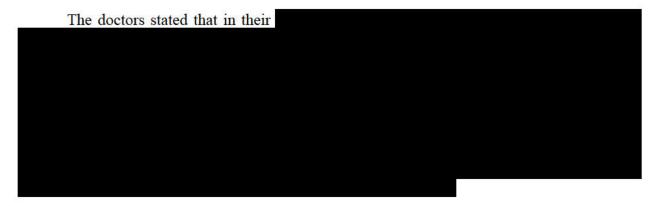
Louise, Abbinanti, a family friend

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II. The Extraordinary and Compelling Reasons to Release Mr. Masecchia

The current compassionate release policy statement provides that "[e]xtraordinary and compelling reasons exist" where an individual is "suffering from a medical condition that requires long-term or specialized medical care this is not being provided and without which the defendant is at risk of serious deterioration in health or death." U.S.S.G. § 1B1.13(b)(1). Mr. Masecchia has demonstrated this extraordinary and compelling reason for release.

Mr. Masecchia has provided a "Declaration Regarding the Medical Care of Michael Masecchia, at the Federal Correctional Complex, Butner," reviewed by Dr. Nicole Mushero and Dr. Hyunji Do of Boston Medical Center and Boston University School of Medicine dated February 24, 2025. The doctors, who were not paid for their review and were not affiliated with his case, reviewed 360 pages of Mr. Massechia's medical records to provide their expert opinion on Mr. Masecchia's medical care.



The Butner medical facility is not able to provide Mr. Masecchia with the care that he so desperately needs, to avoid a life-threatening return of Given the day-to-day circumstances of the prison setting and the difficulties in managing the care of seriously ill inmates, Mr. Massechia's would be better treated if he was released into the community, through compassionate release. This could have life or death consequences or Mr. Masecchia.

A. Mr. Masecchia will pose no danger to society and has a release plan to ensure his safe transition to the community.

Mr. Masecchia's rehabilitative transformation is best illustrated by his exemplary institutional record in the BOP. He has taken at least three separate drug education and rehabilitation, along with any other class that he can get his hands on, including acoustic guitar, business, the solar system, horticulture, financial literacy, green living, Spanish, life skills math, creative writing, and hobby-craft. He has used his skills from decades as a teacher and educator to tutor students who are obtaining their high school degree at FCI Butner. He has also helped develop the fitness and health programs and Butner Low Security Institution. During the evenings, Mr.

Masecchia spends his time writing, with the goal of developing an educational text for use in English Language Arts. He has been dutifully obtaining First Step Act credits in order to shorten his sentence, and has not one disciplinary incident.

According to Mr. Masecchia's FSA Recidivism Risk Assessment (PATTERN Risk) Score, he is a "minimum" and "low" danger of recidivism. In February 2023, he was granted "community custody" status.¹⁷ Community custody is the lowest security status, and it permits the inmate to work in the community with or without official supervision and to become eligible for furloughs.

Even if released from your facility, Mr. Masecchia will still be subject to supervised release, which provides further assurances that his reintegration into the community will be safe. Were he released now, he would submit to three years of supervised release, which would include drug screening, a prohibition of possession of firearms and ammunition, and DNA collection. These measures are more cost-effective than incarceration and are wholly sufficient to meet the goals set forth in § 3553(a)(2): just punishment, deterrence, protection of the public, and rehabilitation of the defendant.

Mr. Masecchia is also a non-violent offender. ¹⁸ The incident for his arrest and prosecution stemmed from his distribution of marijuana, which is a non-violent offense. Mr. Masecchia was also sentenced to a gun charge, but there is no evidence of any violence whatsoever in his case. While it is also true that officers seized a number of guns during the search of his residence, Mr. Masecchia, an avid outdoorsman and hunter, maintains, as he did at sentencing, that the guns were all legally registered, and were only for use in hunting, and for a hunting club with friends.

For all of these reasons, the BOP should move for a reduction in sentence in Mr. Masecchia's case immediately. If you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

/s/ Elizabeth Budnitz

Counsel for Michael Masecchia
The Last Prisoner Project
185 Hall Street # 314

Brooklyn, NY 11205
(917) 691-0478
liz@lastprisonerproject.org

¹⁷ OPA Pardon Form at 10-11.

¹⁸ See Superseding Indictment, Dkt. 46; Plea Agreement, Dkt. 68.



Liz Budnitz < liz@lastprisonerproject.org>

Compassionate Release Request - Michael Masecchia - Reg No. 28848-055

1 message

Liz Budnitz <liz@lastprisonerproject.org>
To: BUX-ExecAssistant-S@bop.gov

Tue, Mar 4, 2025 at 12:30 PM

Dear Warden:

I represent Michael Masecchia, an inmate in your facility with Register Number 28848-055. I am hereby requesting that your facility and the Bureau of Prisons grant him compassionate release.

This letter requesting compassionate release is below, but a copy of this letter plus exhibits is also attached to this email in a PDF format. I have also sent you a paper copy of this letter in the United States Postal Mail today to the address of your facility.

I request that the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) release Mr. Masecchia under their compassionate release policy because there are "extraordinary and compelling" reasons for a sentencing reduction, a reduction is consistent with the 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a) sentencing factors, and Mr. Masecchia has a strong release plan that will ensure he does not pose a danger to the community and will meet his needs. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1) (A); U.S.S.G. §1B.1.13; BOP Program Statement 5050.50.

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Beach, Florida, but she spends a significant amount of time in Buffalo, where Mr. Masecchia and his siblings care for her.

Mr. Masecchia's mother-in-law resides in his home in Buffalo. She about twelve years ago and suffers from which have left her unable to care for herself or to be left alone. Mr. Masecchia's wife, who works from home, cares for her. This is a significant burden on the

family, especially on Krista Masecchia, who is struggling to juggle caring for her mother and working a full-time job. If he were released, Mr. Masecchia would become a caregiver of his mother-in-law.

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-Letter from Ezana Y Kashay, whom Mr. Masecchia has mentored.

These letters show a remarkable man, an inspiring teacher, and a positive member of the community, one who is deserving of compassionate release.

On December 9, 2020, Mr. Masecchia pleaded guilty to Possession with Intent to Distribute Marijuana (21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) & (b)(1)(D)) and Possession of Firearms in Furtherance of Drug Trafficking Crimes (18 U.S.C. § 924(c)(1)(A)(i)).

Before Mr. Masecchia was sentenced, he was diagnosed with Mr. Masecchia was released on bail for treatment for about 13 months, and had zero incidents while on home confinement. From July 2021 to January 2022, Mr. Masecchia underwent delaying his sentencing.

On May 4, 2022, Mr. Masecchia came before the Court for sentencing having submitted 19 letters of support on his behalf from former colleagues, former students, friends, and family, including letters from three principals, eight teachers, and four former students. He expressed unmitigated remorse for his crime, saying that there was "no excuse" for what he did, and that he "humiliated" himself, his family, and his colleagues. The Court, in sentencing Mr. Masecchia to the lowest end of the guidelines, noted that the letters submitted on his behalf "describe a dedicated educator and mentor to [his] students, many of whom who have been faced with difficult circumstances." The Court stated:

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permitting Mr. Masecchia to rely on her for some support as he transitions back into the community. His three grown children, who are all gainfully employed, will also support his transition back to the community. Additionally, Mr. Masecchia earned a pension from his decades as a high school teacher, which also provides health insurance. He plans to assist his nephew with opening a fitness club and to develop the Visual Arts and Language curriculum that he has been working on while in prison. In addition to his strong family support, Mr. Masecchia would also receive assistance from The Last Prisoner Project.

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deterioration in health or death." U.S.S.G. § 1B1.13(b)(1). Mr. Masecchia has demonstrated this extraordinary and compelling reason for release.

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The doctors stated that in their "medical opinion, Mr. Masecchia has numerous serious medical

conditions that require close follow-up." Exhibit A: Medical Letter, para. 4. In addition, the doctors wrote, require serial monitoring, including follow-up visits, and blood work, to ensure that they do not progress." Exhibit A, para. 4. They make clear that his and which should be under under the care of Exhibit A, para. 10. However, the doctors found, Mr. Masecchia "has not gotten the recommended follow-ups in a timely manner, putting him at risk of delaying diagnosis of Id. This is particularly troubling, the doctors state, because "possible treatments that may be feasible for are limited due to his prior treatment that he underwent for his The Butner medical facility is not able to provide Mr. Masecchia with the care that he so desperately needs to avoid a life-threatening Given the day-to-day circumstances of the prison setting and the difficulties in managing the care of seriously ill inmates, Mr. Massechia's better treated if he was released into the community, through compassionate release. This could have life or death consequences for Mr. Masecchia.

A. Mr. Masecchia will pose no danger to society and has a release plan to ensure his safe transition to the community.

Mr. Masecchia's rehabilitative transformation is best illustrated by his exemplary institutional record in the BOP. He has taken at least three separate drug education and rehabilitation classes, along with any other class that he can get his hands on, including acoustic guitar, business, the solar system, horticulture, financial literacy, green living, Spanish, life skills math, creative writing, and hobby-craft. He has used his skills from decades as a teacher and educator to tutor students who are obtaining their high school degree at FCI Butner. He has also helped develop the fitness and health programs and Butner Low Security Institution. During the evenings, Mr. Masecchia spends his time writing, with the goal of developing an educational text for use in English Language Arts. He has been dutifully obtaining First Step Act credits in order to shorten his sentence, and has had not one disciplinary incident.

According to Mr. Masecchia's FSA Recidivism Risk Assessment (PATTERN Risk) Score, he is a "minimum" and "low" danger of recidivism. In February 2023, he was granted "community custody" status. Community custody is the lowest security status, and it permits the inmate to work in the community with or without official supervision and to become eligible for furloughs.

Even if released from your facility, Mr. Masecchia will still be subject to supervised release, which provides further assurances that his reintegration into the community will be safe. Were he released now, he would submit to three years of supervised release, which would include drug screening, a prohibition of possession of firearms and ammunition, and DNA collection. These measures are more cost-effective than incarceration and are wholly sufficient to meet the goals set forth in § 3553(a)(2): just punishment, deterrence, protection of the public, and rehabilitation of the defendant.

Mr. Masecchia is also a non-violent offender. [14] The incident for his arrest and prosecution stemmed from his distribution of marijuana, which is a non-violent offense. Mr. Masecchia was also sentenced to a gun charge, but there is no evidence of any violence whatsoever in his case. While it is also

true that officers seized a number of guns during the search of his residence, Mr. Masecchia, an avid outdoorsman and hunter, maintains, as he did at sentencing, that the guns were all legally registered, and were only for use in hunting, and for a hunting club with friends.

For all of these reasons, the BOP should move for a reduction in sentence in Mr. Masecchia's case immediately. If you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

/s/ Elizabeth Budnitz

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[1] PSR ¶ 67.
   PSR ¶ 70 (with ages adjusted for 2024).
   PSR ¶ 71.
   PSR ¶ 68.
   PSR ¶ 88.
   PSR ¶ 88.
[7]
   PSR ¶ 90.
[8]
   PSR ¶ 92.
[9]
   These letters of support are included herewith.
PSR ¶ 1. Mr. Masecchia received the latter charge because firearms and ammunition were found in his home, but
otherwise, Mr. Masecchia was not charged with or found guilty of any violent offenses. PSR ¶ 21.
[11] PSR ¶ 77; Dkt. 282.
[12]
PSR ¶ 77.
[13] PSR ¶ 70.
    See Superseding Indictment, Dkt. 46; Plea Agreement, Dkt. 68.
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